



# EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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## *news digest*

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92119D

### **Archbishop of Canterbury and pope discuss differences over ordination of women**

Following the tradition of his last four predecessors, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey met in Rome with Pope John Paul II and discussed the future of dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. While covering a broad range of subjects, the meeting was dominated by the thorny issue of ordination of women to the priesthood. Carey called it the "toughest part" of the conversation.

In their first meeting since Carey was elected archbishop of Canterbury a year ago, the pope reminded Carey that the Vatican still considers the ordination of women priests a "grave obstacle" to the eventual unity of the two churches, and Carey expressed his conviction that ordination of women is a "proper development" in the life of the church.

Despite opinions by many observers that Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue has been strained recently, Carey and the pope released a statement that "stressed their commitment to the search for fuller communion" and their intention to continue a theological dialogue begun 25 years ago. (Page 6)

92120D

### **Scientists and religious leaders urge government to address environmental issues**

The looming threat of environmental destruction has forged a new coalition of scientists and religious leaders that has demanded that the U.S. government "change national policy so that the United States will begin to ease, not continue to increase, the burdens on our biosphere and their effect upon the planet's people."

More than 125 participants of a conference sponsored by the Joint Appeal for Religion and Science for the Environment (JARSE) in Washington, D.C., "served notice to congressional leaders and the chairs of key environmental committees on Capitol Hill that the religious community is engaged and active in this issue," said Paul Gorman, director of program for environmental issues at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York and executive director of JARSE.

Gorman noted that the meeting included a broad spectrum of the religious community, including Roman Catholics, mainline and evangelical Protestants, and Jews. Gorman also urged religious leaders and scientists to put aside whatever philosophical differences divided them in order to address the crisis. "The unique nature of the environmental issue is that it dissolves long-standing barriers in the name of a common cause," he said. "It clearly requires a moral and scientific response." (Page 7)

92121D

## **Diocesan ecumenical officers grapple with full agenda in new triennium**

"Never was the ecumenical agenda of the Episcopal Church so packed with action as it is in this triennium--and we are ready," the Rev. William Norgren said at the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers Annual Meeting, May 4-7, in Denver. Norgren, the Episcopal Church's ecumenical officer, cited the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue's proposal for full communion, a report from the Consultation on Church Union (COCU), and the continuing dialogue with Roman Catholics and the Orthodox as major items on the ecumenical agenda.

At the top of that agenda is a directive from last summer's General Convention to "develop a process of study throughout this church, wherever possible in cooperation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, of the theological soundness and ecumenical appropriateness" of proposals for full communion between the two churches.

Dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics has been clouded by what Norgren called "widespread disappointment" with the Vatican's recent official response to the final report of the first dialogue. "It is also important to recognize that the official Roman Catholic response establishes an area of common faith regarding the Eucharist and ministry between the two churches for the first time, which cannot in future be denied by Roman Catholics," Norgren added. (Page 9)



92122D

## **Episcopalians testify in favor of Peace Tax Fund**

Two Episcopalians have testified before a congressional subcommittee that American citizens should be allowed to withhold taxes that support the military. The Rt. Rev. William Davidson, retired bishop of Western Kansas, and Patricia Washburn, vice-chair of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and a member of the Standing Commission on Peace with Justice, spoke in favor of the Peace Tax Fund bill, a proposal that would make support of the U.S. military an option for taxpayers who are conscientious objectors.

The proposal, originally introduced in 1972, would amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow conscientious objectors to direct the percentage of their federal income taxes equivalent to military expenditures into a special trust fund and would help finance peace-enhancing projects such as the retraining of workers displaced by conversion from military production, or the improvement of international health, education, and welfare programs.

"I can no longer be complicit in a system which spends one-half its resources on destruction of human life rather than enhancement and celebration of life," Washburn told congressional committee members during her testimony. (Page 11)

92123D

## **Atlanta priests labor to make a house a home**

For five days in May that resembled an old-fashioned barn raising, 85 Episcopal priests in the Diocese of Atlanta joined a construction crew from Habitat for Humanity in the west Georgia town of Carrollton and built a new home for a family of five.

The novice builders built the house--and a Christian community among themselves, too. During construction, the workers lived together and participated in a Benedictine-style retreat at a nearby church camp.

The house "is a new beginning for me," said Geraldine Johnson, the owner of the new house. Disabled with back trouble after a fall, Johnson heard about the Habitat for Humanity program during a physical therapy session. Her family was chosen from 40 applicants for the new home. (Page 12)

92124D

## **Contemporary issues inspire Episcopal Church Foundation funding**

The Episcopal Church Foundation supported a range of ministry projects dealing with pressing contemporary needs, both in and outside of the church during its recent board meeting. The foundation's board of directors approved nine grants totaling approximately \$100,000 for programs with strong reconciliation and pastoral themes, including ones that concentrate on building congregations and reaching out to minorities and youth.

One of the larger grants (\$20,000) went to Earth Ministry, an environmental ministry program affiliated with the Diocese of Olympia. Based in Seattle, Washington, where much of the controversy regarding the spotted owl and the timber industry has surfaced, the project seeks to help local Episcopalians utilize spiritual resources when confronting environmental questions. Another group to receive a large grant (\$25,225) was the clergy association of the Diocese of Dallas. Its project will explore the application of what has become known as "family systems theory" to the corporate life of the diocese.

In addition, the foundation awarded grants to Youth Ministry Leadership Academy at Day Spring Camp and Conference Center in the Diocese of Southwest Florida (\$14,000); the St. Francis Multi-Cultural Training Center of the Diocese of Southwest Florida (\$9,000); the Oasis of the Diocese of Newark (\$20,000); the In-Basket of the Diocese of Milwaukee (\$5,750); and the Congregation Development Team of the Diocese of Southeast Florida (\$6,000). (Page 14)

92125D

## **Chinese leader says church continues to grow in spite of political tensions**

Despite a "tightening up" of the political situation in China, the gains made by the church in recent years "cannot be swept away," according to Bishop K.H. Ting, leader of the China Christian Council. During a recent visit to New York City, Ting reported that the intellectual climate in China is "better today than at any time in the last 40 years."

Ting, who was ordained an Anglican bishop in 1955, said that the church in China is still in a race to provide enough clergy to serve churches that are opening at the rate of two every three days to serve an estimated 5-6



million Protestants.

The China Christian Council, Ting explained, is different from other national councils because it is not comprised of member churches.

"Denominational structures no longer exist in China--but we are not yet the church of Christ in China," Ting said. The council itself exists only because "we emphasize mutual respect in matters of faith and worship. This is the level of unity we can achieve at this time--to go beyond this we would encounter theological difficulties," he said. (Page 16)

92126D

## **Brazilian, U.S. Episcopal Churches seek closer ties**

When the Episcopal Church of Brazil was granted untimely autonomy from the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. in 1965, few could have foreseen the hardships--or the opportunities and growth--the Brazilian church would experience. Now, nearly 30 years later, the two churches are attempting to chart new directions together.

Nurtured as a missionary diocese of the Episcopal Church since 1907, the Brazilians experienced "an enforced autonomy" in 1965, and received decreasing financial support from the United States until 1982, when they were able to claim a tenuous self-support.

No covenant agreement was made to formally separate the two churches--a necessary step in becoming an independent province in the Anglican Communion--or to provide specific opportunities for continued contact, said the Rev. Canon Ricardo Potter, the Episcopal Church's partnership officer for Latin America and the Caribbean. "Now we're trying to correct that process. (Page 17)

92119

## **Archbishop of Canterbury and pope discuss differences over ordination of women**

**by James Solheim**

Following the tradition of his last four predecessors, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey met in Rome with Pope John Paul II and discussed the future of dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

While covering a broad range of subjects, the meeting was dominated by the thorny issue of ordination of women to the priesthood. Carey called it the "toughest part" of the conversation.

In their first meeting since Carey was elected archbishop of Canterbury a year ago, the pope reminded Carey that the Vatican still considers the ordination of women priests a "grave obstacle" to the eventual unity of the two churches, and Carey expressed his conviction that ordination of women is a "proper development" in the life of the church.

In a sermon at All Saints Episcopal Church in Rome the day before his May 25 meeting with the pope, Carey said that he was "aware that the ordination of women to the priesthood presents a problem to the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. It does so for many Anglicans as well."

Carey added, "But I have to recognize that in many parts of the Anglican Communion the ordination of women has not destroyed the church but, they believe, has given it new life." He said that such obstacles "will not defeat us if the end of our pilgrimage towards unity is Christ."

In a statement released by the Vatican, the pope and Carey "stressed their commitment to the search for fuller communion" and their intention to continue a theological dialogue begun 25 years ago.

### **Vatican response chills dialogue**

That dialogue has been strained recently by what is widely characterized as the Vatican's lukewarm response to the official report of the first Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue, which stressed theological differences rather than agreement. The pope told Carey, however, that the report "should not be interpreted as putting a brake on the dialogue" but rather a "stimulus to the resolution of outstanding differences."

Carey had publicly criticized the Vatican response as "disappointing" and said that the implied requirement that partners in dialogue must conform to theological formulations would make further progress "hazardous."



On the eve of his visit, Carey also said that "the search for truth requires humility. The moment one communion insists on embodying it, we deny it to another."

A week before the visit, Carey stirred controversy with remarks criticizing the Roman Catholic Church's position opposing all forms of artificial birth control, suggesting that the Vatican had effectively prevented any discussion of population control at the June United Nations-sponsored Earth Summit in Brazil. In an interview with London's *Daily Telegraph*, Carey contended that the Vatican position contributes to global poverty and environmental destruction. Carey later said the subject was not part of his conversation with the pope.

While Carey is generally believed to be pessimistic about future relations with the Vatican under this pope, he tried to sound upbeat after the meeting. While the two churches may "disagree on a number of important matters," he said, "we are at a stage in friendship where it is possible to say tough things to one another."

92120

## **Scientists and religious leaders urge government to address environmental issues**

**by Jeffrey Penn**

The looming threat of environmental destruction has forged a new coalition of scientists and religious leaders that has demanded "bold actions" by the U.S. government to address the crisis.

In a May 12 declaration titled the "Mission to Washington," 125 participants at a recent conference in Washington, D.C., challenged members of Congress to "change national policy so that the United States will begin to ease, not continue to increase, the burdens on our biosphere and their effect upon the planet's people."

"We served notice to congressional leaders and the chairs of key environmental committees on Capitol Hill that the religious community is engaged and active in this issue," said Paul Gorman, director of program for environmental issues at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York and

executive director of the Joint Appeal for Religion and Science for the Environment (JARSE).

The conference, sponsored by JARSE, brought scientific experts and religious leaders together to draft a common strategy for solutions to the environmental crisis. "A sense of urgency and the fear of paralysis has become so great that people are reaching out across very traditional boundaries to forge partnerships that are equal to the challenge," Gorman said.

"We commit ourselves to work together for a United States that will lead the world in the efficient use of fossil fuels, in devising and utilizing renewable sources of energy, in phasing out all significant ozone-depleting chemicals, in halting deforestation and slowing the decline in species diversity, in planting forests and restoring other habitats, and in realizing worldwide social justice," conference participants asserted.

#### **Issue that dissolves long-standing barriers**

Gorman noted that the meeting included a broad spectrum of the religious community, including Roman Catholics, mainline and evangelical Protestants, and Jews. Gorman also urged religious leaders and scientists to put aside whatever philosophical differences divided them in order to address the crisis. "The unique nature of the environmental issue is that it dissolves long-standing barriers in the name of a common cause," he said. "It clearly requires a moral and scientific response."

"Science and religion, working together, have an essential contribution to make toward any significant mitigation and resolution of the world environmental crisis," the participants said. "Differences of perspective remain among us. We do not have to agree on how the natural world was made to be willing to work together to preserve it."

#### **Needed: a shift in ethics and morality**

"I think there is a realization that we need a major shift in ethics and morality," said Bishop Jerry Winterrowd of Colorado, a member of the Episcopal Church's environmental stewardship team and participant at the meeting. "Our mandate is to find a theology that will support new values--ones that no longer support consumption of everything in sight."

"There is an extraordinary amount of knowledge and commitment on environmental issues, a real willingness to try and figure out how the church can be moved to a clearer vision and mission," Winterrowd said. "I think the Episcopal Church could play a key role in the issue."

"There is now a broad interfaith effort to support the goals of the Episcopal Church as it moves forward with plans to address the environmental



crisis," Gorman added.

Winterrowd reported that members of Congress seemed particularly receptive to the church's leadership. "Several congresspeople said that it is time for the church to 'practice what it preaches,'" Winterrowd said. "An increasing sense of a global neighborhood has provided us with a tremendous opportunity for church to rise to the occasion."

### **Consecrated and concentrated efforts**

In addition to a broad strategy developed at the Washington meeting, Gorman reported that some practical responses emerged, including establishment of a "religious environmental consortium." The consortium will consist of the U.S. Catholic Conference, the National Council of Churches, the Evangelical Environmental Network, and the Consultation on Jewish Life and the Environment.

The consortium will coordinate educational activities among the denominations, particularly to strengthen environmental efforts on the local level, Gorman said. He described the effort as "a more consecrated and concentrated effort to encourage local congregations to address the issue."

92121

## **Diocesan ecumenical officers grapple with full agenda in new triennium**

**by James Solheim**

"Never was the ecumenical agenda of the Episcopal Church so packed with action as it is in this triennium--and we are ready," the Rev. William Norgren said at the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers Annual Meeting, May 4-7, in Denver. Norgren, the Episcopal Church's ecumenical officer, cited the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue's proposal for full communion, a report from the Consultation on Church Union (COCU), and the continuing dialogue with Roman Catholics and the Orthodox as major items on the ecumenical agenda.

At the top of that agenda is a directive from last summer's General Convention to "develop a process of study throughout this church, wherever possible in cooperation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, of

the theological soundness and ecumenical appropriateness" of proposals for full communion between the two churches.

Diocesan ecumenical officers will work with their bishops to develop a diocesan-level study of the final documents from the third series of dialogues, "Toward Full Communion" and "Concordat of Agreement." The diocesan study team, working with Lutherans in many cases, will choose parishes for the study and report the results of those studies to a provincial coordinator for discussion next spring. The responses will then be reviewed by a theological committee appointed by the church's Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations.

"There was a great deal of energy around this challenge--and a wide range of examples where the two churches are already cooperating in mission," the Rev. Christopher Agnew said after the meeting. Agnew, who is the Episcopal Church's associate ecumenical officer, said that the churches have shared the Eucharist since 1982 and have used that common experience to build broader cooperation.

A joint Lutheran-Episcopal coordinating committee is putting together a resource packet for use at the local level beginning this fall. The Lutherans voted last summer to postpone their official involvement in the study process until they complete a study of ministry in 1993.

Norgren reported to the diocesan ecumenical officers that the second report of the COCU is "before the dioceses for study." A questionnaire focusing on the eight elements of the covenant proposal was passed out at the meeting. Two dioceses in each province will be asked to respond, and provincial coordinators will return the questionnaires to the ecumenical office. The COCU is a "covenant communion of churches," comprised of nine denominations "committed to seek together a form of visible unity which will be at once truly catholic, truly evangelical, and truly reformed."

### **Dialogue with Roman Catholics is clouded**

The Anglican-Roman Catholic agenda has been clouded by what Norgren called "widespread disappointment" with the Vatican's official response to the final report of the first dialogue (see December 11 ENS). "It is also important to recognize that the official Roman Catholic response establishes an area of common faith regarding the Eucharist and ministry between the two churches for the first time, which cannot in future be denied by Roman Catholics," Norgren added.

Norgren also reported that the dialogue with the Orthodox, suspended last June because of what the Orthodox called "recent developments and tendencies in the Anglican-Episcopal church," is still under discussion. "They



are seeking means to define the nature of their relationships and dialogues with the Episcopal Church," Norgren said.

The church's Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations is preparing for a national consultation on ecclesiology in the fall of 1993, with the theme, "Ecumenism of the Possible: Witness, Theology and the Future Church."

"The movement for the unity of Christians is living through a difficult period," Norgren observed. It is therefore important to "unite and coordinate forces and to exchange information" among the churches, he added. He concluded with a quote from the writer Bernard Dupuy: "If the hour of ecumenism has not yet come, there is an ecumenism of the possible which does not wait for its hour."

The diocesan ecumenical officers elected the Rev. Richard Townley, Jr., as their new president. Townley is ecumenical officer for the Diocese of New Jersey and is rector of St. Andrew's Church in Lambertville.

92122

## **Episcopalians testify in favor of Peace Tax Fund**

Two Episcopalians testified before a congressional subcommittee on May 21 that American citizens should be allowed to withhold taxes that support the military.

The Rt. Rev. William Davidson, retired bishop of Western Kansas, and Patricia Washburn, vice-chair of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and a member of the Standing Commission on Peace with Justice, spoke in favor of the Peace Tax Fund bill, a proposal that would make support of the U.S. military an option for taxpayers who are conscientious objectors.

"I urge passage of the Peace Tax Fund legislation because I want a nonviolent future for my four children and three grandchildren," Washburn told members of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures. "I can no longer be complicit in a system which spends one-half its resources on destruction of human life rather than enhancement and celebration of life," she said.

The Peace Tax Fund bill was first introduced in 1972. It would amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow conscientious objectors to direct the

percentage of their federal income taxes equivalent to military expenditures into a special trust fund and would help finance peace-enhancing projects such as the retraining of workers displaced by conversion from military production, or the improvement of international health, education, and welfare programs.

"I have found myself through most of my life to be in great conflict of mind, heart, and conscience between my desire to be a loyal citizen of our great nation, and at the same time to live by my fundamental belief that war and violence are not acceptable means to achieve our desires as citizens and our goals as a nation," said Davidson. He reviewed Episcopal Church policy on war and peace since the first affirmation in 1934 that "war as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

Supporters of the Peace Tax Fund contend that passage of the legislation would result in greater revenues, since conscientious objectors who currently withhold their tax payments would no longer do so. The Internal Revenue Service and the Bush administration oppose the legislation.

**--based on a report by Mary Miller, executive secretary of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship**

92123

## **Atlanta priests labor to make a house a home**

**by Cary Patrick**

Geraldine Johnson and her four children will move into a new house this spring. And she has 85 Episcopal priests from the Diocese of Atlanta to thank for prayers and elbow grease that made the move possible.

For five days in May that resembled an old-fashioned barn raising, the priests joined a construction crew from Habitat for Humanity in the west Georgia town of Carrollton and built Johnson a new four-bedroom home. The house "is a new beginning for me," she said. Disabled with back trouble after a fall, Johnson heard about the Habitat for Humanity program during a physical therapy session. Her family was chosen from 40 applicants this year.

Johnson will pay about \$190 a month toward the interest-free loan for her new house; in 20 years she will own it. Parishes and individuals in the diocese raised the necessary \$30,000 for construction.



Building on a block foundation laid by professional masons, the workers installed a floor in short order, and within three hours were setting up the prefabricated wall panels. By late afternoon, having hoisted the roof trusses, and having added decking and tar paper, the priests were already concentrating on heavenly things--attaching waterproof shingles.

Construction proceeded during the week like clockwork: from the window units, to the built-in shower, to the bulldozer that arrived to landscape the lawn outside.

Bishop Frank Allan picked up a hammer and joined in the effort. He told local reporters that "the clergy most of the time are rather wordy. We think it will be good to put our bodies into a project like this to give us some balance."

### **Building a community**

The novice builders, undaunted by unseasonably cold weather, built the house--and a Christian community among themselves, too. During construction, the workers lived together and participated in a Benedictine-style retreat at a nearby church camp.

Following a daily evening service, silence was kept until worship at 6:15 a.m. the next morning. "Benedict would have us listen rather than just adhere to rules," said the retreat leader, the Very Rev. GERALYN WOLF, dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Louisville, Kentucky. Wolf made an altar of 2 x 4s and a piece of siding, and a cross from scraps of roofing, insulation and other material found on the construction site.

A Taizé-style tune, appropriately named *Carrollton*, written by Wolf's organist-choirmaster, Sam Batt Owens, was the theme song for the week. It was based on Psalm 127: "Unless the Lord builds the house, our labors are in vain./ Come dwell within our hearts, O Lord, your love our work proclaim."

The spirit of the retreat has already inspired two other groups in the area. The pastor of a large United Methodist church in Atlanta read a newspaper account of the project and is now in the process of organizing a group of clergy to build a house. Even bank officials who were involved in construction-related transactions have expressed interest in organizing employees to form a house-building crew.

Geraldine Johnson's new home was blessed under a drizzly sky on May 8 with Bishop Allan leading the weary workers in a simple service of Scripture, prayer, and hymns. Johnson and her children received the customary gift from Habitat for Humanity, a Bible--and a Book of Common Prayer, compliments of the bishop.

"I don't know what to say," Johnson kept saying to the priests. She

hugged them over and over. "Thank you, thank you," she said.

At the dedication, an elderly bystander from the neighborhood looked at the house and remarked to one of the priests: "Ya'all must really love people. I've never seen anything like this. It's amazing."

--Cary Patrick is director of communication for the Diocese of Atlanta.

92124

## **Contemporary issues inspire Episcopal Church Foundation funding**

**by Lindsay J. Hardin**

At its latest board meeting, the Episcopal Church Foundation supported a range of ministry projects dealing with pressing contemporary needs, both in and outside of the church. The foundation's board of directors approved nine grants totaling approximately \$100,000 for programs with strong reconciliation and pastoral themes, including ones that concentrate on building congregations and reaching out to minorities and youth.

### **Spirituality and the environment**

One of the larger grants (\$20,000) went to Earth Ministry, an environmental ministry program affiliated with the Diocese of Olympia. Based in Seattle, Washington, where much of the controversy regarding the spotted owl and the timber industry has surfaced, the project seeks to help local Episcopalians utilize spiritual resources when confronting environmental questions.

"The pressing urgency of the eco-crisis...is not just a pragmatic problem," said the Rev. Carla V. Berkedal, executive director of Earth Ministry. "It is a moral and spiritual problem that has to do with conducting our lives in light of who we are and what we know."

Berkedal and other project planners said that they intend to develop five congregation-based task forces that will tackle such issues as stewardship, spirituality, ecology, and prayer. They also said that they hope to influence parish programming and diocesan efforts regarding environmental concerns.

"Our hope is to find a vibrant way to proclaim the love of God as we



confront a web of complex issues, and to preach hope in the midst of despair," said Berkedal. "It is a scary time, and yet we have an opportunity for a powerful and positive response."

### **The diocese as family**

Another group to receive a large grant (\$25,225) was the clergy association of the Diocese of Dallas. Its project will explore the application of what has become known as "family systems theory" to the corporate life of the diocese.

Recognizing that conflict between clergy occurs in many other dioceses as well as their own, project planners aim to explore systemic factors, habits, and attitudes that might stand in the way of mission and ministry.

"We see this as a pastoral and educational model that will help us build bridges," said the retiring president of the clergy association, the Rev. A. Thomas Blackmon. "Our hope is to establish and maintain honest and productive relationships with one another and to share the findings of this project within and outside the diocese."

Bishop Harold Hopkins, executive director of the Office of Pastoral Development of the House of Bishops, said that he believes the project will benefit the entire church. "The 'systems' approach to diocesan life and relationships...is extremely important. We talk a lot about the systemic nature of episcopal and clergy leadership, including family-of-origin issues...but we have not yet done much to try to test experientially what we are talking about. This project will give an excellent 'laboratory' in which to develop theories and test learnings."

### **Other grants**

In addition to the above, other funded projects were Youth Ministry Leadership Academy at Day Spring Camp and Conference Center in the Diocese of Southwest Florida (\$14,000); the St. Francis Multi-Cultural Training Center of the Diocese of Southwest Florida (\$9,000); the Oasis of the Diocese of Newark (\$20,000); the In-Basket of the Diocese of Milwaukee (\$5,750); and the Congregation Development Team of the Diocese of Southeast Florida (\$6,000).

**--Lindsay J. Hardin is a freelance writer.**

**(Editor's note: For more information, contact William G. Andersen, Jr., executive director, or Lynn M. Merwin, program associate, of the Episcopal Church Foundation at [212] 697-2858.)**

92125

## **Chinese leader says church continues to grow in spite of political tensions**

**by James Solheim**

Despite a "tightening up" of the political situation in China, the gains made by the church in recent years "cannot be swept away," the leader of the China Christian Council said at a news conference in New York sponsored by the National Council of Churches (NCC).

In fact, the intellectual climate in China is "better today than at any time in the last 40 years," said Bishop K.H. Ting, who was ordained an Anglican bishop in 1955 and is a leader of the Three-Self Movement, formed in 1954 to make the church self-supporting, self-administering, and self-propagating. He reported that many non-Christian scholars are "no longer hostile--actually quite friendly and supportive." While not interested in baptism or church membership, they are "culture Christians," interested in religion and the content of faith.

China has slowly reentered the ecumenical mainstream after decades in isolation. At the Canberra Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) last year it officially renewed its membership in the WCC.

"In the last 10 years we have come to understand that it is not enough to talk only about church, we should be more conscious of being a part of the world church," Ting said. Joining the WCC "is a way to educate ourselves about the universality of the church, moving beyond the particularities of our own church," he added. At the same time, Ting warned that because of its years of isolation, the Chinese church is not "theologically and intellectually prepared to take part in the dialogues" among member churches of the WCC.

The China Christian Council, Ting explained, is different from other national councils because it is not comprised of member churches.

"Denominational structures no longer exist in China--but we are not yet the church of Christ in China," he said. The council itself exists only because "we emphasize mutual respect in matters of faith and worship. This is the level of unity we can achieve at this time--to go beyond this we would encounter theological difficulties," he continued.

Ting denied that there was any tension between the China Christian



Council and participants in the so-called "house church" movement. Even with 7,000 church buildings in use, it is not always possible or convenient for Christians to find a church. "We consider them part of the Three-Self Movement, and they attend our meetings," Ting said. "We think they have a right to continue to worship in homes, and I think this will be a lasting form of the church in China," he added.

The church in China is still in a race to provide enough clergy to serve churches that are opening at the rate of two every three days to serve an estimated 5-6 million Protestants. For many years, Nanjing Seminary was the only Protestant school in China, but today there are 13 theological schools, with over 800 full-time students. In the last five years, Nanjing Seminary has produced 55 teachers for the other schools, with help from Europeans and North Americans. "We are still in a hurry to produce church leaders for the next generation," Ting said.

92126

## **Brazilian, U.S. Episcopal Churches seek closer ties**

**by Mike Barwell**

When the Episcopal Church of Brazil was granted untimely autonomy from the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. in 1965, few could have foreseen the hardships—or the opportunities and growth—the Brazilian church would experience. Now, nearly 30 years later, the two churches are attempting to chart new directions together.

During a five-day meeting at the Community of the Transfiguration in Cincinnati, Ohio, in early May, five Brazilian church officials and four Episcopal Church representatives met to chart what is hoped will be a long-term relationship of mutual partnership.

Founded in 1890 by two missionaries from the Virginia Theological Seminary—James Watson Morris and Lucien Lee Kinsolving--the Episcopal Church of Brazil includes 75 parishes and 105 missions serving about 70,000 baptized Anglicans in the southern half of the largest South American nation.

according to the Rev. Canon Jubal Pereira Neves, the church's provincial secretary.

### **Uneasy journey for Brazil**

The century-long journey has not been easy for the Brazilian church. Nurtured as a missionary diocese of the Episcopal Church since 1907, the Brazilians experienced "an enforced autonomy" in 1965, and received decreasing financial support from the United States until 1982, when they were able to claim a tenuous self-support.

"It was a shock for the Brazilians," Bishop Glauco Soares de Lima of South-Central Brazil said in an interview. "Since then we have felt in isolation from our mother church." Despite the loss of U.S. support, "the mission work continued," Soares de Lima said, "lacking personnel, supplies, and funds." The national seminary, closed in 1970, was able to reopen only in 1989.

Brazil's economic crisis, its plight as the largest third-world debtor, and rampant unemployment and inflation made complete financial independence unrealistic. "We learned how to do mission with a scarcity of resources," the bishop said.

No covenant agreement was made to formally separate the two churches--a necessary step in becoming an independent province in the Anglican Communion--or to provide specific opportunities for continued contact, said the Rev. Canon Ricardo Potter, the Episcopal Church's partnership officer for Latin America and the Caribbean. "Now we're trying to correct that process.

"The Brazilian church is the forgotten church," Potter said. "We really need to bring them to the forefront."

### **Centennial pledge to renew partnership**

The growth of the Brazilian church impressed Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning when he joined in the church's centennial celebrations in 1990. "To celebrate a centennial today is more an act of faith than an assertion of triumph," Browning said. He praised the church for "embarking anew on a voyage of self-discovery, of discerning anew the gifts with which you have been graced."

Browning pledged to renew the partnership in 1990, and the group meeting in Cincinnati was appointed to form a covenant agreement and provide the initial framework for a new, healthier partnership. Although specific plans did not emerge--both churches must review any proposals at a synodal or national level--the nine participants agreed that the sessions had been



invigorating and encouraging.

"The old relationship is past. We are now looking for a sister-to-sister relationship," Soares de Lima said. "We are truly--perhaps for the first time--discussing ourselves and each other and the reality of the two churches."

**--Mike Barwell is director of communication for the Diocese of Southern Ohio.**

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## **Press Alert: Executive Council to meet in Albuquerque**

The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church will meet in Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 15-19. Council members will be staying at the Doubletree Hotel (telephone [505] 247-3344). Meetings will be held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, 401 Second Street, (telephone [505] 768-4575).

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning will deliver his address from the chair at the morning session on June 16. (Copies of the address will be available to the press.)

Plenary sessions will deal with the church's long-range planning and development, and consideration of a revised budget in the light of a revenue shortfall announced at the last council meeting in February. Members of the council will be guests of the Diocese of the Rio Grande and will visit diocesan ministries on the afternoon of June 17.

The meeting will close with a plenary session on June 19, including remarks from the presiding bishop. Browning will be available to the press for a conversation when the council adjourns at approximately 11:30 a.m.

For further information, contact James Solheim, the church's news director, at (212) 922-5385.



## news briefs

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### More ACP awards than ENS could keep track of

In the long and impressive list of Episcopal publications receiving awards at the recent Associated Church Press (ACP) meeting, we omitted two awards of merit. *The Record*, diocesan newspaper in Michigan, received an award for the best feature article for a newspaper with a circulation of fewer than 10,000. *Diocesan Dialogue*, diocesan newspaper in Utah, received an award of merit for most improved newspaper. ENS congratulates all the winners and apologizes for this sin of omission.

### Lutheran and Episcopal bishops jointly confirm 25

In what may have been the first joint Lutheran-Episcopal confirmation service, a Lutheran bishop and an Episcopal bishop together laid hands on 25 young confirmands at Todos Los Santos (All Saints) Church, a Hispanic ministry in Minneapolis. The Rt. Rev. Sanford Hampton, the suffragan bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota, and Bishop David Olson of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America crossed an historic divide to celebrate, in the words of Hampton, "a joyous experience...in the spirit of the Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement on Interim Eucharistic Sharing." Olson explained that he and Hampton "affirmed aspects of both [the Episcopal and Lutheran] traditions in the preaching and Eucharist." Todos Los Santos was established as an ecumenical ministry a few years ago through a joint effort by Episcopalians and Lutherans.

### Bush responds to WCC leader on Earth Summit request

In responding to World Council of Churches (WCC) General Secretary Emilio Castro's plea that the United States throw its full weight behind the upcoming Earth Summit in Brazil, President George Bush said in a letter that the United States "is aggressively pursuing international efforts to address



problems related to climate change, ozone depletion, forests, oceans, biological diversity, and technology cooperation with developing countries." The letter, signed by Allan Bromley, the president's assistant for science and technology, cited the 1990 Clean Air Act and the administration's proposal to improve energy efficiency as indicative of Bush's environmental commitment. Bush has announced that he will attend the Earth Summit, but it is uncertain whether the United States will sign the climate and biodiversity accords that constitute the centerpiece of the summit's agenda. The Earth Summit, formally known as the United Nations Conference on Development and Environment, will convene in June.

### **NCC preparing a call to action on urban crisis**

Following completion of a forthcoming in-depth assessment of the civil violence in Los Angeles, the Rev. Joan B. Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of Churches (NCC), will convey "a call to ecumenical action" to 32 member communions. According to a report of the NCC's Executive Coordinating Committee, meeting in New York, May 18-19, the NCC will formulate a comprehensive approach to the urban crisis by consulting with churches and ecumenical, community, private, and government organizations, and the police. An ecumenical team made a preliminary assessment of the situation when it visited Los Angeles immediately after the recent violence.

### **Liturgical group urges direct ordination to orders**

An organization for liturgical renewal is pressing for the option of direct ordination to the orders of bishop, priest, and deacon. The Council of Associated Parishes, based in the United States and Canada, said in its "Toronto Statement" that all baptized persons "should be eligible for ordination directly to any of the three orders." The council's statement, issued in Toronto on May 3, said that lay persons should be able to be ordained as bishops without first becoming priests, as was apparently the custom in the early centuries of the church. In Phoenix last July, the Episcopal Church's General Convention directed the church's bishops to study the issue and then to make recommendations, a process that could culminate in a canon law permitting direct ordination to any of the three orders.

### **Scandal over bishop may impact Irish abortion vote**

The scandal surrounding Eamonn Casey, the Roman Catholic bishop of Galway, Ireland, who recently resigned under fire when a Connecticut woman publicly revealed he had fathered her 17-year-old son, may seriously dilute the

Irish church's credibility in the debate over an upcoming abortion referendum, commentators and other informed observers said. The Casey uproar occurred shortly after the church staunchly defended Ireland's strict abortion ban in the case of a pregnant teenage rape victim. "There will be a growing skepticism of episcopal pronouncements on abortion, contraception...all the socio-sexual issues which are preoccupying our society," said John A. Murphy, a member of the Irish Senate and a professor at Cork's University College. Casey confirmed that he had an 18-month relationship with the Connecticut woman and that he had made payments to her for child support.

### **Methodists retain affiliation with pro-choice group**

The United Methodist Church reaffirmed its pro-choice stance on the tempestuous abortion issue, as delegates to its quadrennial policy-making assembly narrowly rejected a move to sever the 8.9-million-member denomination's ties with the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights. Although the church offers no direct monetary support to the abortion-rights coalition, two of the church's agencies, the General Board of Church and Society and the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, are members, as are 15 other Protestant, 13 Jewish, and 5 Unitarian-Universalist and humanist organizations. Anti-abortion Methodists argued that ties to the advocacy group exceed the church's official position, which speaks of "tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion." The nation's two larger faith groups, the Roman Catholic Church and the Southern Baptist Convention, are staunch opponents of abortion.

### **Saudis challenge Jordan's Hussein over Muslim sites**

Signaling continuing displeasure at Jordan's pro-Iraqi stance during the Persian Gulf War, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia launched a war of words challenging Jordan's guardianship of the major Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. Fahd's public offer to spend \$70 million to restore and maintain the al-Aqsa mosque, the Dome of the Rock, and other Muslim properties long under Jordanian control served to remind the financially strapped Jordanians of the relative strength of oil-rich Saudi Arabia. Fahd has not spoken to Jordan's King Hussein since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, and Saudi Arabia has maintained its suspension of financial aid and oil delivery to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to protest Hussein's refusal to join the U.S.-led war against Iraq. The current Saudi gesture over the Jerusalem sites echoes earlier religious battles between the Saudi and Hashemite clans. Following World War I, the Saudis drove the Hashemites from Mecca and Medina, thereby assuming custodianship over Islam's two holiest sites.



## **Roman Catholic bishops in Kenya urge Moi to step down**

Amid a new spate of civil violence, the Roman Catholic leadership in Kenya urged the government of President Daniel arap Moi to resign, saying that the government "has no legitimate claim to remain in power." Maurice Cardinal Otunga and the country's 18 Roman Catholic bishops said in a statement that injustice, corruption, "brutal police actions, arbitrary arrests, [and] hypocritical assurances about security" had characterized the current regime.... Trained warriors in large groups...are seen by everyone except government servants." The bishops' statement lent credibility to the widespread presumption that Moi is inciting members of his minority Kalenjin tribe to ethnic violence as a way of discrediting multiparty politics. Last December, Moi acceded to international pressure to end his one-party rule. The Roman Catholic statement marked a departure from the low political profile the denomination has maintained in Kenya. Anglican leaders have been in the forefront of opposition to the Moi regime.

## **Pope beatifies Escriva amid heated debate**

In the face of protests in Europe and the United States, Pope John Paul II beatified the founder of Opus Dei, a religious movement viewed by many Roman Catholics as a shadowy yet powerful conservative force in the church and society. The act of beatification confers the title of "Blessed" upon Msgr. Jose Maria Escriva de Balaguer, a Spaniard who founded Opus Dei in 1928, and raises him to within one step of sainthood. Critics of Opus Dei charged that the process of beatification had been simplified to favor Escriva. For his sainthood to be granted, Escriva's supporters must "prove" that he performed a second miracle. He is already credited with curing a Carmelite nun of a rare disease after she prayed to him in 1976, the year following his death. Escriva is known for his dictum that sanctity can be achieved through everyday work.

## **Gorbachev shares his views with interfaith delegation**

Addressing the need for international cooperation in the wake of the cold war's missed opportunities, former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev told a U.S. interfaith delegation: "It is up to the church to make politicians moral. The job of the churches is to put forth a vision, provide moral authority, and enhance spirituality." Gorbachev met in New York on May 13 with 14 ecumenical leaders, including Episcopal Bishop Barbara Harris, the Rev. Jessie Jackson, and National Council of Churches General Secretary Joan Brown Campbell. Campbell praised Gorbachev for "playing the statesman's role" during the hour-and-a-half meeting. Asked by Jackson whether the Los Angeles riots "damaged the moral authority of the U.S.," Gorbachev replied

that he was struck by the positive note of "the American people...wrestling with their problems [and] rethinking their future."

### **Theologians ponder challenges of new world order**

"The church must be the radical edge of politics, saying what the politicians can't say," said Dr. Allan Boesak, in characterizing the role of the church in South Africa as he opened a consultation on the new world order, held in New York, April 29-May 1. Boesak, a South African theologian and anti-apartheid negotiator, told the gathering of 150 theologians and pastors that the Los Angeles riots lent an urgency to the notion that legislation alone will not eradicate racism. "This is no time for cautious theology," Boesak told his audience, "because cautious theology is poison." Gabriel Habib, general secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches, also addressed the wide-ranging consultation, sponsored by the National Council of Churches' Project on a New World Order and the Theology in Global Context Association. Habib said that the United States had undermined its credibility in the Arab world by applying what he called a double standard in resolving injustices in Iraqi-occupied Kuwait and in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. In underscoring the global nature of contemporary problems, Professor Larry Rasmussen of Union Theological Seminary in New York said that "social justice must embrace eco-justice and vice versa." Both affluence and poverty are taking heavy tolls on the earth's resources, Rasmussen asserted.

### **Black parishes top list of largest U.S. congregations**

Three black churches top the list of largest congregations in the United States, according to a recent survey compiled by the newsletter *Church Growth Today*. More than 4,000 worshipers attend Sunday services at World Changers ministry in College Park, Georgia, Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Houston, and West Angeles Church of God in Christ in Los Angeles. The three are among the nation's 300 "megachurches," or congregations with more than 2,000 weekly attendance, according to Dr. John N. Vaughan, the newsletter's editor. Vaughan said that there were only 10 megachurches in the country in 1970. Nevertheless, church attendance in the United States has remained at around 40 percent since World War II, largely because the growth of big churches has been offset by a decline among small churches.

### **Brotherhood's truck stalled in Uganda**

A water tank truck purchased by the Episcopal Church's Brotherhood of St. Andrew for a small Ugandan village is being held by Ugandan customs



officials for tariffs and taxes of \$8,000. The brotherhood raised \$36,000 to purchase the truck for relief of drought conditions in eastern Uganda. Bishop Livingstone Nkoyoyo of the Diocese of Mukono has described the tariff as "exorbitant." Nkoyoyo and Episcopal Church officials have been joined by U.S. government officials in an effort to have the truck released.

### **WCC team explores conflict over Uniate churches**

An ecumenical team from the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Conference of European Churches (CEC) visited Belarus and the Ukraine to explore the conflict between Orthodox and so-called "Uniate" churches in Eastern Europe. Uniate churches, also known as Greek Catholic churches, are congregations dating from the 16th to 19th centuries that acknowledge the primacy of the pope, but retain the Orthodox liturgy. Leaders of Orthodox churches have long criticized the Uniate churches as a thinly veiled attempt by the Vatican to proselytize members from their jurisdiction. Tensions between the two groups have increased sharply since the recent political climate in Eastern Europe has fostered more religious freedom. Following their visit, the WCC and CEC teams will prepare recommendations to lessen the tension between the Uniate churches and the Orthodox.

### **World Council struggles for financial equilibrium**

The financial situation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) has improved in recent years, but the council is still struggling toward "financial equilibrium," according to a May update by the Rev. Michael Davies, assistant general secretary for finance and administration. "The world economic recession, the Gulf War, the varying fortunes of member churches, and fluctuating exchange rates have all contributed" to the financial crisis, Davies said. After cutting staff from 340 to 270 (including 40 part-time employees) and introducing other budget cuts, the financial outlook is still not encouraging. "It is clear that, at least until a significant and regular increase in income can be assured, the level of staff and activity in the council will have to be very carefully monitored," he added. Davies also observed that "the reduced staff team is already stretched to the limit maintaining the current level of programs and activities."

### **Network renews commitment to plight of refugees**

The Anglican Refugee and Migration Network met in Amman, Jordan, May 12-20, "to revitalize the commitment of the Anglican Communion to the worldwide plight of refugees." The network chairman, Archbishop Khotso Makhulu of Botswana told the 24 delegates from six continents that "the need

for compassion and justice has never been more urgent." He chastised the United Nations for cutting the budget of the High Commission on Refugees and added that "it is now obvious that the current UN definition of a refugee is too narrow to cover the contemporary needs for the protection of many people on the move." The network adopted a resolution challenging the 1951 definition of a refugee as "someone with a well-founded fear of persecution who is unwilling to return home." The resolution said that such a definition "no longer adequately covers the range of displaced people, asylum-seekers and migrant workers who make up millions of people on the move in the world today." The Rt. Rev. Sir Paul Reeves, the Anglican Communion's observer at the United Nations, reminded the participants that "hospitality to the stranger is a sacred duty" too often ignored by churches that find it difficult to welcome the stranger.

### **Province of the Pacific discusses racism, changes in style**

Shock waves from the Los Angeles riots were felt on the volcanic island of Oahu as representatives from the 18 dioceses of the Province of the Pacific dealt with issues of racism, women in the church, and exclusion of minorities. "The tectonic plates of colonial capitalism are shifting," Bishop Steven Charleston of Alaska told the 63rd synod of the province meeting in Hawaii, May 12-15. "We have two options--plant our feet and hold fast or slip and slide with the movement so we don't take a fall. Does the church want to plant her feet or slide?" Charleston asked. "The old tools of keeping balance are not working any more. We need to reshape the Episcopal Church if we want to retain it," he added. "Does the church recognize that an old way has now died?" asked the Rev. Jerry Drino, the province's director of cross-cultural ministry development, speaking about the riots. Drino said that exclusion of people and a consumer economy have created "an open wound," contending that "we must care for that wound. God has formed something new within us. That is the challenge to the church and us as a nation." The province voted to move away from a legislative model to a small-group discussion and plenary on a predetermined issue.

### **Evangelicals continue move toward Orthodox churches**

Five years ago, a group of 2,000 evangelicals in 17 congregations joined the Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. They were recently joined by another 15 congregations, and "the new Orthodox are now proselytizing their evangelical friends--with notable success," according to an article in the evangelical magazine *Christianity Today*. The converts to Orthodoxy said that being a Christian is a process, rather than a decision, and



that they are drawn by "a true hunger for worship," according to Peter Gillquist, a former evangelical who is now director of the archdiocese's Department of Missions and Evangelism. Gillquist reported that Episcopalians, fleeing the liberal leanings of that denomination, form the largest group of inquirers. He said that following the consecration of Bishop Barbara Harris in Massachusetts, "my phone rang off the hook. For a lot of Episcopalians that was the last straw. People like Barbara Harris and Bishop John Spong are the best evangelists Orthodoxy has right now."

### **Russian Orthodox try to depose head of Ukrainian church**

An attempt by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church to depose the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is provoking a nasty internal struggle, complicated by political tensions between Russia and the Ukraine. Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev was described as a threat to church unity because he reneged on a promise to convene a regional synod of bishops to elect his successor. The Holy Synod said that Filaret is "prohibited from acting as the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church," and it named Metropolitan Nikodim of Kharkov and Bogodukhov to function temporarily as primate of the church and authorized him to call a synod to elect a permanent replacement for Filaret. Caught in a resurgent nationalism, Filaret sought autonomy and then independence for the Ukrainian church.

### **PEOPLE**

**William G. Andersen, Jr.**, was appointed executive director of the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) during the organization's spring board meeting. Most recently the foundation's vice president for administration, Andersen will coordinate all ECF activities, including those of the Cornerstone Project, a national endeavor to support and strengthen the Episcopal Church's ordained leadership. The foundation was created in 1949 to bolster the ministry and mission of the Episcopal Church, and currently oversees an endowment of some \$18 million. Four new directors were also added to the ECF board: **Robert Imbrie Smith** of Philadelphia; **Gordon T. Ford** of Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan; **N. Vaughn Martin Owen** of Key Biscayne, Florida; and **Deborah Toll Reynolds** of Greenwich, Connecticut.

**Photos available for this issue of ENS:**

1. Carey and pope exchange gifts during Vatican visit (92119)
2. Atlanta priests raise rafters of new home (92123)
3. Chinese Christian leader visits Church Center (92125)

If you would like to purchase a photo, contact the Episcopal News Service at (800) 334-7626.

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Due to budgetary restraints, the Episcopal News Service is no longer available after hours and on weekends by beeper.

**Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are June 12 and June 26.**





## *news features*

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### **Out of bounds: The church faces clergy sexual misconduct**

**by Beth Rhea**

Last September, when the dust from General Convention had barely settled, a district court jury in Colorado decided a lawsuit that sent a shiver of unease through the church. The jury found the Diocese of Colorado and its former diocesan--Bishop William Frey, a prominent conservative bishop--liable for psychological damage to a woman who consulted Frey after she had an affair with a priest who was counseling her.

The plaintiff, who had a lengthy history of psychological disorders, had claimed that the priest seduced her and that Frey's handling of the case exacerbated her psychiatric problems. Frey was negligent, the jury found, in his supervision of the priest and in his handling of the affair after he learned of it. Their decision--to award the woman \$1.2 million in damages--spurred growing numbers of disclosures by victims and put bishops on their guard. Just weeks before the decision, Frey, whose case is being appealed, had been in the national spotlight as the sponsor of a General Convention resolution on sexuality, one that, ironically, would have explicitly required clergy to refrain from sexual activity outside marriage.

Among the clergy, as in all of the "helping" professions, defining the sexual boundaries between counselor and client can sometimes be as difficult as determining who's to blame when they've been crossed. With the Frey case, the issue of clergy sexual misconduct surged to the fore of the church's consciousness. Bishops and priests alike have begun to acknowledge that such exploitation can have profound repercussions for individual victims, for parishes, for priests who have violated their ordination vows and jeopardized

their careers, and for the institutional church, which can wind up in court.

### **The power to serve, or sin?**

Sexual exploitation in the church is generally defined as any sexual contact between a priest and a person over whom he or she has power. It goes beyond sexual harassment, which is usually taken to mean sexual innuendoes such as risqué jokes or pressure to have sex, but no physical contact.

In the vast majority of reported cases, a male priest has acted on a female parishioner. Bishop Harold Hopkins, director of the House of Bishops' Office of Pastoral Development, has led more than 20 diocesan conferences on sexual misconduct, and he noted that 85 to 90 percent of the cases he's seen have fit that profile, though he has also seen female-male, male-male, and female-female violations as well.

The causes of sexual exploitation run the gamut, ranging from "serious psychosocial disorder, to [priests] being unaware of their own needs, or being unaware of their spiritual power and authority," according to Hopkins, who added that "almost anybody is at risk if they're in personal stress, or if their marriage is in trouble."

No matter what the cause, the impact of such boundary violations in the church is intensified by the spiritual authority priests can wield, and the profound trust often placed in them by their parishioners. At its core, this kind of sexual misconduct is the misuse of power, according to the Rev. Margo Maris, canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Minnesota and a nationally known expert on clergy sexual exploitation. Maris has handled about 300 cases during the past six years, ranging across diocesan and denominational lines, and she has been instrumental in helping her diocese comply with a Minnesota state law--the first of its kind in the country--that makes sexual contact between a clergy person and a parishioner a felony. The priest-parishioner relationship is "a power balance," Maris said, "and the clergy person always has the position of power, mainly because he or she is seen as a holy person."

One young woman, whose priest used blackmail to force sex on her, agreed. "This person's giving you absolution," she said. "This person represents God." And when he violates the appropriate boundaries, she said, "it tampers with your belief system."

Because of the inherent inequality of power and the vulnerability of the parishioner, "it is always the clergy person who has to say no," Maris said. By taking the vows of ordination, "we agree to keep our people safe."



**'Clergy don't do things like that'**

Sexual exploitation is nothing new, but for decades it was one of the church's best-kept secrets. "We've got quite a backlog of cases from the past," said Hopkins, "partly because we didn't know how to deal with them, and partly because of denial."

The church's prevailing attitude used to be, "clergy don't do things like that," or "it's the woman's fault; she seduced him," Hopkins said. That response was wrong, he asserted, and "is very clearly a violation of women's rights and human rights."

The true extent of clergy sexual exploitation today is difficult to determine because until recently, most victims were loath to come forward. But Gary Schoener, a clinical psychologist from Minneapolis who has handled cases of clergy sexual misconduct for nearly two decades, said that he believes the available figures are alarming enough even though they don't present the full picture. Schoener cited a 1984 survey of Wisconsin helping professionals who were asked how many clients they had interviewed during a three-year period who had sex with a professional counselor. Though only one-fourth of the surveys were returned, 653 cases were reported, and 11 percent of these were victims of clergy sexual exploitation. Because the issue was not publicly recognized even then, and because the "vast majority of victims didn't complain," Schoener said, "the potential numbers are really frightening."

During that same year, Richard Blackmon, a Ph.D. candidate at Fuller Theological Seminary, completed a dissertation on stress factors for clergy, surveying clergy across denominations including the Episcopal Church. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents said that they had had some form of sexual contact with a church member, and when asked explicitly if they had ever had sexual intercourse with a parishioner, 13 percent of the clergy said that they had. Schoener said that those results were "the highest self-report figures ever attained of any professional group ever surveyed."

Despite efforts to deny its existence, sexual misconduct has occurred around the country, and during the past decade state laws, societal attitudes, and church recognition of the issue have given many victims courage to come forward.

**Victims need to be taken seriously**

What the victims seek, Hopkins said, is "to be taken seriously, to be told by the church that it was wrong for the priest to do this." They have also begun to realize that they can get "redress of grievances." He and Schoener agreed that lawsuits generally result from a victim's feeling that the church mishandled her case and discounted her concerns.

One victim's story confirms this. Struggling to deal with sexual abuse at the hands of her father, the victim sought counseling with her priest, who eventually threatened that if she did not have sex with him, he would reveal to her family the many secrets she had confided to him. "What I really want from the church is an apology," she said--an apology from her priest and from her bishop, whom she believes did not take her seriously.

But just as much as an apology, the woman said that she wants restitution, something she had not sought "until they started to ignore me." Since she alerted her bishop to the situation, she said, the priest she accused has been made a canon of the diocesan cathedral, has had his expenses paid for a short stay at an alcoholic treatment center, and continues to receive his salary and benefits though he is not permitted to go to the church, pending an ecclesiastical hearing. "But no one has addressed my needs," the woman said, and now she seeks reimbursement for the cost of several years of therapy, for workshops on sexual exploitation she has attended, and for the travel and phone costs she has incurred during her efforts to deal with her exploitation.

### **Taking the hard line**

After the decision in the Colorado case, Bishop Frey contended that bishops need more authority "if they are to be held responsible for the misbehavior of all individual clergy." In a more recent interview, he told the *Virginia Episcopalian*, "We have the structure that orders [priests'] official behavior, but we cannot control what a priest does with his zipper."

Maris disagreed with Frey's assertion. She said that she believes bishops have the necessary authority by virtue of the fact that "no priest can be in a bishop's diocese without his [or her] permission," and because, according to the rites of ordination to the priesthood, priests are required to "follow the orders of their bishop."

Maris continued, charging that some bishops are simply "ignoring" cases they see before their eyes. "I don't think they know how much power and authority they do have," she said. A bishop has the responsibility "to confront that [priest] and connect him with what is needed to make him well, a whole person."

While she conceded that confronting the problem "is an incredibly hard thing to do," Maris said that there are numerous ways to address the issue. She recommended conferences such as those she and Hopkins have led, designed for bishops and diocesan executive staff. Some bishops have also contacted her or Hopkins to help "walk them through" specific cases, and Maris said that she sometimes refers bishops to their peers who have successfully handled such cases.



Schoener is adamant about the message that is conveyed if the church does not respond to sexual misconduct. "You may feel badly when a [clergy] person has blown his life," he said, "but are we not going to have safety and accountability?"

### **Still reluctant to come forward**

Schoener observed, however, that even if diocesan leaders are vigilant about confronting and disciplining guilty priests, "the likelihood that you can get all the cases is virtually nil" because many victims--due to shame, embarrassment, or a fear that the revelation will break up their marriages--are still reluctant to come forward.

In evaluating pastors who are sent to him for treatment, Schoener said that he expects certain criteria to be met in order for psychological treatment to be effective. "We require an admission of guilt," he said, and, in comparing the incident as described by the accused and the accuser, "pretty good agreement on the key facts." He also observed that if the accused pastor exhibits "no remorse, or an openness to change," the chances of rehabilitating him or her are slim.

Schoener warned church leaders that if a priest has been proven guilty of sexual misconduct, the decision of whether to place him or her in a new church should not be taken lightly. Even if they base their decision on the advice of a professional psychotherapist, they are on shaky ground, Schoener said, because if such misbehavior recurs in the new church, all that can be said is that the professional's advice was wrong, and the church may find itself embroiled in a legal morass. Schoener advised any such priest pursuing a new position to "understand that the vestry is taking an incredible risk, and the bishop's taking an incredible risk."

Throughout the country, the church scrambles to make up for lost time. Gradually, victims come to know their rights, bishops grasp the gravity of their role, and priests discover that the power they hold must be handled with care. Together they strive to send an unequivocal message--that, in the words of a General Convention resolution passed last summer, sexual exploitation is an "abuse of trust, a violation of the Baptismal covenant, contrary to Christian character, and therefore wrong."

**--Reprinted with permission from *Virginia Episcopalian* (April 1992)**



## *reviews and resources*

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### **Archbishop Carey to address lay leadership consultation**

Episcopal lay leaders will examine the ethical challenges facing them in their church-related responsibilities when they gather this fall for a consultation with ordained church leaders. Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey will present the keynote address at the consultation, "Values in Vocation: A Challenge for the Laity," to be held September 11-13 at the Washington (D.C.) Capital Hilton Hotel. On Sunday morning, September 13, Carey will preach at the National Cathedral, and Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning will celebrate the Eucharist. Carey's sermon will be broadcast to gatherings of Episcopalians across the United States by satellite hook-up. Episcopal lay leaders Verna Dozier and J. Keith Miller will also speak at the weekend consultation, sponsored by Trinity Church, New York. For further information, contact Katherine Kurs or Deborah Griffin Bly, of the Communications Office of Trinity Church, at (212) 602-0819.

### **Union of Black Episcopalians to convene in Atlanta**

The 24th annual meeting and conference of the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) will be held in Atlanta, on the campuses of Morehouse College and Clark Atlanta University, June 28 through July 3. The UBE, a national organization encouraging black participation throughout the Episcopal Church, will gather under the theme "Expanding Our Horizons Through Evangelism: Celebrating the Diaspora in Family, Church, Community, and the World." Evening worship services will be held at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in downtown Atlanta, and the Atlanta chapter of UBE will sponsor recreational and entertainment events on the weekends preceding and following the conference. For additional information, contact the Rev. Canon George W. Brandt, Jr., dean of the conference, at (404) 365-1039 or Carolyn McFarlin, conference coordinator, at (404) 627-4306.



## **Virginia conference to focus on environment**

The Diocese of Virginia will focus its attention on the environmental crisis when its 1992 Bishop's Conference meets July 5-9 at Shrine Mont, the Diocese of Virginia's retreat center located in the Shenandoah Valley. The Rev. Dr. Charles P. Price, professor emeritus at Virginia Theological Seminary, will deliver the keynote address for the conference, which is gathering under the theme "God's Face in Creation: A Theology for the Ecological Crisis." Price's opening address will be the first of four talks he will present exploring the roots of the ecological crisis and potential ethical alternatives for confronting it. Numerous workshops and recreational events are among the conference offerings. The cost for the conference is \$235 and includes meals, accommodations, and all general conference fees. To make reservations, or to obtain further information, contact Shrine Mont at (703) 856-2141, or the Program Office of the Diocese of Virginia (110 West Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23220) at (804) 643-8451 or, within Virginia, toll-free at (800) DIO-CESE.

## **Book of Common Prayer available on disk**

An electronic version of the complete *Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*, plus all the collects (both traditional and contemporary) and propers from *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (1991), is now available for IBM-compatible computers from T.S.H. Electronic Publishing. The text is easily accessible through the use of "keywords" and cross-referencing. This electronic version of the *BCP* can fit on a single high-density floppy disk or can be installed from 360K floppies. The package comes with installation instructions and built-in on-line help, and requires DOS 2.11 or higher. It can be ordered for \$49.95 from T.S.H. Electronic Publishing, 2462 Webb Avenue, Bronx, NY 10468-4802. When ordering, please specify desired disk size and density.

## **CBS-TV program spotlights outreach of young people**

"Children on the Frontline," the second program in CBS-TV's four-part "Religion and Culture" series, takes a look at American youth who reach out to people marginalized by current national priorities. The 30-minute program focuses on teens who volunteer in their community or faith group to help feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and combat substance abuse. The program will be broadcast on Sunday, April 12, at 11 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time).

